

In speaking of illicit

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- 583 intercourse with another man's wife, they use the expression *gun*
 • [837] *amot*, which is fairly translatable by 'steal' and is applied also to
 acts of theft in the ordinary sense in which we use that term. It is,
 of course, dangerous to rely too much on linguistic evidence, but
 [684] it is noteworthy that to 'steal' a man's wife and to steal his cere-
 monial currency were once bracketed together, by a man with
 whom I was discussing the subject of theft, as crimes belonging
 to the same category, and that in some cases the same penalty
 has been exacted for both. All the people with whom I discussed
 the matter in relation to marriage gave me the impression that no
 distinction existed in their minds between paying for a wife and
 paying for anything else of importance.

- 586 The rules governing the operation of the custom are entirely
 compatible with this view. If the woman refuses to perform the
 duties of a wife, her husband can, and does, divorce her and
 demand his currency back—he is not receiving what he paid for
 so he repudiates the purchase. But if she has cause to divorce
 him, he does not get his currency returned to him, the break-down
 of the transaction was not her fault. If she dies without giving
 768 him a child, he will expect to be repaid, unless he receives a sister
 587 in her place. Pinari told me that the currency handed over in
 respect of Riro, the wife of his son Wasē, who had died, childless,
 not very long before my visit, would be returned, except one
 string, which was to be retained by her relatives 'because her
 body stays here', the woman having been buried at Kurtatchi.
 I have not seen a similar custom recorded elsewhere. If her death
 845 occurs in child-birth, and the child lives, repayment is made in
 768 part only, one string being retained 'for the child'. But if the
 child dies too, the full amount is usually asked and given. For a
 wife dying after having borne more than one child, no repayment
 is expected—the husband has had his money's worth, so to speak.

- 562 It does not follow that the woman is regarded as the absolute
 property of the man to do as he likes with. That is definitely not
 581 the case. What seems to me to be the crucial point was put very
 clearly by a woman, Matēv, on our way back from witnessing this
 very transaction, when the matter was naturally the subject of
 conversation. She said:

'Tab to wen nor a kiki pi man.'

Thing pay we genitals of woman.

i.e. 'What we pay for is the woman's genitals.' That is to say,

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593 The time when the girl is handed over to her husband is, in every case, judging both from what I have seen and from what the girls themselves have told me, a period of strain. It not infrequently happens that the young wife, whether from actual fear or merely from shyness, runs away before the marriage can be consummated, and takes refuge with her mother. Her mother is supposed to bring her back, together with an offering of ceremonial pudding, but sometimes much persuasion, or even force, is necessary before she can be induced to return. An instance of this came under my personal observation. Gerigir is a young man of perhaps nineteen or twenty, his wife, Kalo, perhaps thirteen or fourteen. She belongs to a village several miles distant. She did not want to be married, and has frequently run away and returned to her mother. On one occasion she stayed away for several months, and this came to the notice of Pinari, who keeps a sharp eye on all that happens in his village. He finally asked Gerigir why his wife was not living with him. It turned out that he had never consummated the marriage. He said she always ran away from him. Pinari sent him, with some other people, to fetch her. I went with the party. When we got there, Kalo hid herself inside her mother's hut, crying bitterly, and nothing would persuade her to come. Her mother refused to force her, and finally we had to return without her. Another deputation was sent over next day, and out of shame her mother made her go; she was brought into Kurtatchi, still crying. She stayed a couple of weeks, during which the marriage was consummated, and then ran away again. Gerigir was shortly afterwards discovered in a compromising situation with one of Pinari's wives, and thought it prudent to absent himself from Kurtatchi, so he went and lived in his wife's village, from which he had not returned when I left.

739 The following 'medicine' may be used by a man whose wife frets for her mother:

[824] Kakarink (*Selaginella flabellata*).

Take the leaves of this fern and mix them with *oin*, and rub this mixture on to the girl's hair. This will make her cease to long for her mother and she will stay with you.

593 The outset of her married life is a trying time for the girl. Muben was a pathetic figure for many weeks after her marriage with Kakari (Pl. 9), who, having a septic foot and other affairs of

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513 his own to worry about, did not take much notice of her, in spite of her shy efforts to tend and please him. It was obvious that she was lonely and unhappy, although Kakari's mother, Mat'ev, was kind to her, and encouraged her to take her share in the life of the village. Before I left she had begun to settle down better, and the two of them might be seen going about together, but Kakari never seemed to appreciate her, though she was acknowledged to be an attractive girl.

LATER MARRIED LIFE

[576] How much affection eventually grows up between the young husband and his still younger wife, it is difficult to say. Etiquette forbids any show of affection in public, and in such personal matters one is obliged, obviously, to rely largely upon inference. So far as my observation goes, it seemed to me that the younger men were often neglectful of their wives. This may in part have been due to shyness, but in more than one case known to me the youth was certainly carrying on an intrigue with another man's wife a couple of months or so after the consummation of his own marriage. Judging from external appearance, the early years of a young couple's life together seem, in many cases, to be difficult and perhaps unhappy. But man and wife eventually become accustomed to each other and settle down, especially when there are children, for the most part amicably enough. In later married life I noticed that deference was shown to a man's first wife, to whom he had been betrothed in childhood, beyond that bestowed upon subsequent wives, and if she were dead she was referred to in terms implying affection, at least this seemed to be the case with some of the men whose marriages came under discussion in the course of taking their genealogies. It was more difficult to get the women to talk about their husbands. Some old widows looked back upon their married lives with anything but pleasure, but in other cases there was evidence of real affection, an outstanding example being that of the widow, a middle-aged woman still not [764] unattractive, who begged that her husband might be buried in the house, and who was determined not to marry again because she had cared so much for him. This attitude was perfectly comprehensible to the village, and was said not to be unusual.

On the whole, I incline to think that a census of happy, unhappy, and tolerable marriages among these people would reveal about the

586 The procedure is simple. The woman either goes, or is sent, back to her own people, and probably quickly finds another husband. If the husband divorces the wife, he demands the return of the ceremonial currency he gave to her people at the time of the marriage. If the wife divorces the husband, her relatives are under no obligation to return the ceremonial currency, but in practice they sometimes do so—it seems to be a matter of family pride. The children go with the mother. If she marries again, her new husband takes the children also. In many cases with which I am personally acquainted, he looks after them with as much care as if they were his own, and it was only on taking the genealogy of the family in detail that I discovered the actual state of affairs. Sometimes, however, they are cared for by other relatives of the woman, probably her sister.

Reasons for divorce on the part of the husband are as follows (the order is that in which they were given to me):

1. Persistent refusal on the part of the wife to cook his food, or continual slowness and carelessness in doing so.¹
2. Refusal of sexual intercourse. In one case this was considered sufficient ground even though the reason for the refusal was that the woman considered it was too soon after the birth of their child (see p. 156 for this regulation). In this case, however, the feeling of the village was against the man, and no one else would marry him.
3. Bad skin disease. This will not usually be given as a cause by itself, but additional to some other charge, probably laziness.
- [837] 4. Adultery, as a rule only if it results in pregnancy, otherwise it is usually condoned, especially if carried on quietly.

Reasons for divorce on the part of the wife are:

1. Failure of the husband to take his share in the work of providing food for the household.
2. Persistent cruelty and severe beating. (But this seems to be very bad indeed before it is countered by divorce.)
3. Inability to perform the sexual act.

¹ During my residence a dispute arose about the wives of two men of Ieta (on Buka). They had married women from villages within Pinari's sphere of influence, so they appealed to him in the matter. They said that although the ceremonial currency had been handed over in respect of these women, and the marriage rites completed, their wives refused to live with them at Ieta or to cook their food or to look after them, so they demanded the return of their currency. Pinari paid them from his own stock, and said he would recover it from the women's relatives.

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595 been dead for some years. Pinari had nothing to say about these two women.

[586] 5, 6. Esa and Tchinawat. Both these women were divorced by Pinari shortly after marriage because they did not get on with his chief wife Rusu. Pinari said he told them: 'If you are not cross you can stay, if you are cross you can go back to your own home, I don't like you any more.' Eventually his brother Boie married both of them; when he died they went back to their own village. Both are now dead.

[588] 7. Gomar. Was married as a child to Sarumpots, the son of Pinari's mother by another husband. He was eaten by a shark before she had had any children by him. This marriage was highly irregular (it is discussed on p. 76), but having taken place, Pinari's succession to her as his brother's widow was quite in order. She is now Pinari's chief wife, since the death of Rusu. Pinari liked her, and made magic to gain her love.¹ They seem to get on very well together, though she now takes second place in his regard, I think, to Kwimau. Her first child died when a few days old. The second is now in her early twenties. Then she lost four in infancy, and has now an infant about a year old.

[588] 8. Kwimau, whom he married after nos. 5 and 6 had been divorced. This marriage was also irregular, since she is Pinari's mother's brother's daughter (*pi'an*), usually a forbidden relationship (see Chap. II). Pinari says they liked each other so much that he had to take her. She is markedly his favourite; he usually occupies her hut, shows her great deference, and chooses her as his companion on various occasions. She has two sons by him, both still quite little.

• [537] 9. Kumun. A commoner belonging to this village. She married a man belonging to a village about ten miles off, and lived there till he died. Then she came back to live with her grandfather at Kurtatchi, and Pinari took a fancy to her and 'bought' her from him. She has had three children by her first husband and one by Pinari, but all are dead. She has a reputation for carrying on intrigues with other men, and after one of the villagers was found in her hut, Pinari took her away to live at the taro garden for a long time. When I left she was pregnant. Pinari declared the child was not his, but she refused to admit that any one else was responsible for it. Pinari was very angry about it, but it seemed to me to be more because his dignity was outraged by the fact that some one had dared to interfere with his—the *tsunaun's*—wife, in his own hut, than because he cared much for Kumun. She is, I think, very highly sexed, and was much freer with speech and gesture in public than most of the women. She is known to make assignations for other women with their lovers.

10. Kamits. Had been the wife of a man named Soli, by whom she

¹ The magic he used is recorded on p. 121.

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593 Sobak treats as if he were his own. She is a hard worker, and lets the other women take advantage of her, making her carry the heaviest loads. Sobak does not make any more demands upon her as regards work than most men make on their wives. He always seems kind to her, and says she is a good wife. I have never heard him talk of beating her. Once she went on a visit to relatives at Hanahan and stayed several days. Sobak was very worried, and told me he was afraid some man there was keeping her away, but all was well when she came back.

[576] Tsonakets has a sister, who was also married at Hanahan, but after her husband's death she came to live in Sobak's household at Kurtatchi, bringing her three little boys. Sobak takes care of them all. In the ordinary way he would have married her, but he does not wish to offend the priest by taking another wife, so he says he is not going to do so.

EXTRA-MARITAL RELATIONS

● 837 In this society, where marriage at or before arrival at sexual maturity is the rule, it follows that such illicit intercourse as may take place will be between persons each of whom is married to another individual.

837 In the olden days, according to my informants, adultery was regarded as a very serious offence, the penalty for discovery being death to both parties. The man's relatives would be responsible [684] for the exaction of the penalty in the case of the man, and the woman's in the case of the woman, no retaliation being offered on either side. An old cannibal of Saposa further stated that the bodies of such offenders were eaten, but at Kurtatchi they said [266] that this final insult was only for those who committed a particularly abhorrent kind of incest (see p. 68). It seems feasible to suppose that the actual state of affairs may have been idealized a little in reminiscence, and that clandestine intercourse was neither so rare nor so drastically punished as report would lead one to believe. In the tales, honour was often satisfied by a fight, and this is a usual outcome nowadays. In some instances, particularly if the advances of the suitor had been unwelcome, he was taken to the beach, where spears and arrows were shot at him. But apparently he was allowed to shoot in return. In answer to questions, arising out of such stories, I was told that this was a true account of what actually [685] used to happen, not merely a made-up tale. It is noteworthy that the same punishment was meted out to any one caught stealing ceremonial currency.

837 Whatever may have been the state of things in the past, there

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seems no doubt that clandestine intercourse has very much increased in frequency of late years, and is no longer regarded as seriously as it used to be. This was stated so emphatically and by so many different people in different localities, that there must be some truth in it. It is safe, I think, to say that the taking of the right to exact the death penalty out of the hands of the native *tsunaun*, consequent upon the rule of the white man, has resulted in a general slackening of observance of the customary laws. Another factor which undoubtedly plays a part in the increase of adultery is the absence of many of the younger men, who go away to work as indentured labourers. They may be absent, under the present regulations, for three years. The young wives usually continue to live with their own relatives, unless the mother-in-law keeps them with her, and in either case, they not infrequently console themselves with the young men of the place. The discouragement of polygamy has also some influence—and will in future have more—on the increase in extra-marital intercourse.

At the present time a very considerable amount of illicit love-making certainly takes place, in fact there were probably few couples, in the villages known to me, of which one or other, if not both, was not, or had not at some time been, engaged in an affair of this kind. Sometimes the meetings are arranged by a third party, either man or, I think more usually, woman, sometimes they are planned directly between the lovers themselves. As one man put it: "The man says to the woman: "To-morrow I will have you again. You come and wait for me here." The next day the woman's husband says to her: "Come, you and I will go to work." She says: "No, I can't, I am ill." But she is only pretending to be ill. Then her husband goes alone to work, and she goes to join her lover in the bush." Here is a story giving the other side of the picture, as told by a woman:

Night came, the husband and wife went into their hut. They went to bed, the woman went to sleep, but the man only pretended to sleep. Presently he got up very quietly, he went outside, he went to the other woman, the one he wanted. His wife woke up, she looked at the bed, her man was not lying on it, the bed was empty. Then she cried, she cried about her husband, she cried, and cried, and cried. Then she got up and took up her husband's bed, and carried it outside, then she broke it all to bits. A woman said: 'Why is she breaking the bed?' Another

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- 837 woman answered: 'She is angry with her husband, because he has gone
578 to meet another woman in the bush.'

Sometimes the lover is bold enough to come to the woman in her own hut. This, if discovered, very considerably aggravates the offence. In the case of Kumun, referred to on p. 112, it seemed to me that Pinari was hardly more angry over the pregnancy itself than he was over the fact that she and her lover had been together in the hut. It turned out that some one who was in their confidence had betrayed them, and Gerigir was caught standing beside her bed while she was lying on it. He made a great point of the fact that he was not lying down with her, but in the end he paid a length of *imun* to Pinari as compensation, though both vehemently denied that he was the father of her expected child. Pinari, however, was not appeased by the payment, even though he accepted it, and Gerigir was still in disgrace when I left, three months later.

837. Endless tales are told about such intrigues. A common incident
538 in them is that the child of one of the pair, angry with its parent, perhaps for not giving it something it wanted, spies on the couple, and goes and tells the husband or wife, as the case may be, of its parent's lover what is going on. Whether this happens in real life as often as it does in the tales, I do not know, but it is certain that the children often have a pretty shrewd idea of the state of affairs.

- 837 Cases of what would in our own society be described as 'entice-
ment' sometimes occur. I select the following instance, which is not an isolated one, from my files: Erut was married to Masor, a man belonging to another village. Pasab, of Kurtatchi, whose

- [832] first wife was dead, wanted her, and made love magic with *magor*
(see p. 121) to cause her to leave her husband and come to him. She did so; her husband divorced her, was given back his ceremonial currency, and Pasab married her. They have one little
593 girl. I saw a good deal of their family life, and thought the relations between them, both with each other and with the child, were extremely good. They are always working in one another's company, seem very happy together, and I have not heard any gossip about either of them, which is rather unusual.

832. If a man wishes to have his wife back, he may try the following
824 'medicine':

If your wife has run away with another man, chew the rootlet of the plant *wapiu* (unidentified) with the betel-mixture, and spit the mixture

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on to the doors of your house. Your wife will then love you again and will come back to you.

Often but little notice is taken of these affairs. Occasionally an injured husband will claim from his wife's lover a string of ceremonial currency or a pig, or he may take the opportunity to divorce his wife, but usually only if he wishes to do so on other grounds. More often nothing is done about it, unless the woman becomes pregnant.

There are a number of plants (see pp. 134-8) believed to possess contraceptive properties, which are generally known and widely used by the women in their intrigues. Whatever the reason, it is certain that these affairs are followed by pregnancy less often than might be expected. When conception does occur, the matter begins to be taken seriously. Sometimes the woman will pretend that the child is her husband's, and this will be tacitly accepted, even though other people besides the couple and the woman's husband know it to be false. This I have on hearsay evidence only. In other cases—this also I have only through informants, but from more than one, and these reasonably reliable—attempts are made to produce an abortion in order to avoid discovery. One account given to me runs as follows: 'If a woman has been with her lover in the bush and finds she is pregnant, she says to him: "My blood is not flowing, I think I am going to have a child, I have had no flow for one moon." They are ashamed, and talk about it for a long time. Then the man gets the leaves of the *karēb* plant (a tough creeper, of the *Rutaceae* order, whose stems are used for making string), and chews them with lime, and rubs the mixture on the women's abdomen. She swallows some of it, and it causes the flow to begin again. Then the man says to all the people who laughed at the woman because they thought she was pregnant: "Look, she is menstruating, she is not pregnant". It may be that the massaging of the abdomen is sufficiently violent to produce the desired effect, without presupposing any actual result of chewing the *karēb* leaves. They say that a woman will never bring about an abortion in the case of a child by her own husband, however many she may have. But they do it for the children of their lovers, because if a woman has a child by a man other than her husband she is ashamed. Cases have occurred in the past of women pregnant by their lovers committing suicide by jumping from the top of a tree.

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- 837 The more usual procedure, nowadays, however, is that the
 58 husband divorces the woman, who then marries her lover. Several
 848 such cases were personally known to me. The following is typical:
 848 Tahol was married to Tsigot, a man much older than herself, and
 while he was absent from the village Wasē became her lover. She
 became pregnant; her husband was very angry when he discovered
 it, but did not divorce her. The child died. Tsigot went to Rabaul
 to work as an indentured labourer, Wasē and Tahol became lovers
 again and had another child. This time Tsigot divorced Tahol,
 and Wasē married her as his third wife. As far as I can judge they
 are living very happily together. His first wife has died, and his
 second is still an immature child, though she lives in his hut. He
 [855] seems to be really fond of Tahol, and both adore the baby, now
 nearly two years old, who gets even more petting than Melanesian
 children usually do.

- 837 No stigma of any sort attaches to the child of such a union,
 848 whether the parents marry or not, and none to the woman if her
 lover marries her. In most of the instances that came under my
 observation, marriage had taken place after the woman's divorce.
 These marriages seem to be among the happiest that I met with,
 which is, perhaps, only to be expected, since they are almost the
 only ones in this society which can fairly be said to be the result of
 individual preference on both sides. But many, perhaps the
 majority, of the clandestine affairs are not taken seriously by either
 partner, and are clearly entered into for no other reason than the
 gratification of physical desire. The word used for them, *riuk*, is
 [195] translatable as 'play'; it is the same word as is used for the play of
 a child, and was also applied to the antics of my kitten.

WOMEN'S PART IN INTRIGUES

- 837 Mrs. Hadden, who was one of the first white people to live in
 this part of the country, and who has always been interested in the
 natives, told me she was certain that the woman was, more often
 than not, the more active, if not the instigating partner in love
 affairs. A similar view was expressed, quite independently, by one
 of the priests, who had worked in the district for many years.
 Direct evidence is difficult to obtain, but there is reason to think
 837 that this is true. It is strongly suggested in the folk-tales, which
 538 do, I am sure, reflect actual conditions. There is, for example,
 a frequently recurring incident of a woman who pretended to be

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ill in order to persuade the man called in to treat her to have coitus with her. The following incident, which happened while I was at Kurtatchi, seems to provide further evidence, in spite of the asseverations of the lady concerned. I give it for what it is worth, with the comments I made shortly after. 437
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'Tarubi is the wife of Tchiriv. Both are about the same age, I should judge somewhere in their early twenties. She was discovered carrying on intrigues with three other men of the village at the same time, two married, the other a widower. Apparently one of the villagers knew about it but said nothing, till one day he told some one at Ruri, Tarubi's father's village. A Kurtatchi man visiting Ruri heard it talked about, and being a friend of Tchiriv's he came back to Kurtatchi in a furious temper and charged Tarubi with it. She admitted the truth of the accusation, but said she didn't want to do it, but the men liked her so much! Tchiriv knew nothing about it till he was told. He said nothing to Tarubi, but went about looking very disconsolate all the rest of the day. Pinari happened to be away. When he came back, after a day or two, the case was laid before him, and he summoned all the people concerned to his hut, where he charged the men with "stealing" Tchiriv's wife. The men denied it, but Tarubi said it was true. Eventually Pinari decided that no action was called for on his part. He said that if he had had plenty of men in his village he would have reported it to the District Officer and asked for the men to be imprisoned, but as he was short of men he would overlook it on condition that Tarubi promised to behave herself in future, thus clearly indicating that he considered she was to blame. It so happened that one of the men involved was his own nephew, and also that one of his wives was proved to have made some of the assignations. He said that he would beat her for it, but I don't think he did. The village clearly regarded the verdict as a show of weakness on Pinari's part. The general opinion was that Tarubi was a public nuisance, and that Tchiriv had better divorce her and send her back to her own village. But Tchiriv said he did not want to send her away. He is really fond of her, and they continue to go about together as before. He is distinctly lacking in vindictiveness, for the day after the investigation he and two of the men concerned were all on my verandah together, apparently on the most amicable terms. It seemed to me that, on the whole, he was rather flattered that his wife should be the object of so much

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- 837 attention. She herself behaved throughout as if nothing was the matter, and the affair blew over.'

In this case, public opinion, both male and female, was definitely against Tarubi, who was held responsible. Although most of the people who condemned her were carrying on—or had at some time carried on—similar affairs of their own, it seemed to be regarded as bad form to overdo it. Matarē, in discussing the case with me, said in so many words that it was all right to have a love affair with one person, but it was bad to have more than one. On another occasion similar judgement was passed against a man for the same reason. He had a reputation for carrying on with a number of women, and when he developed a bad mastoid abscess, it was held to be due to 'poison' made by some of the men whose wives he had 'stolen'. The general opinion was that he richly deserved it; the sympathy generally shown to a person who is seriously ill was not accorded him, and no one, except his old mother, seemed to be sorry when he died. But perhaps, in both cases, the chief crime was to be found out!

COURTSHIP AND LOVE-MAGIC

- 584 The advances which lead up to such intrigues as have just been described provide the only occasion in this society for anything of the nature of courtship, since the pre-arranged marriage of children leaves no opening for it, and the demand of an older man for a woman he fancies as his second or subsequent wife can hardly be so described. In some cases efforts are made by the man to ingratiate himself with the woman so that she will be willing to marry him. But these cases were few, or at least so I gathered from discussions both with men and women.

- 832 A man who wishes to gain the favours of a woman decks his person with aromatic plants, or rubs them on his skin, trims his hair, and decorates himself with paint. All these things may be done by anybody at any time, so his appearance need excite no remark. He finds an opportunity, often during a dance, to indicate his desires to the woman, and if she is willing, they steal away into the bush. He does not trust to his own personal charms to achieve this end, but supplements his own efforts with an appeal to higher powers to help him, or at least with the use of the appropriate 'medicine'. This is called *eto*, the same word as is used for the preparations used in hunting, fishing, and other magic, as well as

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the bush. Here it is not always convenient to lie down, so a standing position is adopted, the man behind the woman who bends her body forward. I have two drawings, both done by young men, showing couples in this position, and on one occasion when I observed children playing at copulation it was done thus.

The bush is the favourite place for love-making. The taro garden is frequently chosen by husband and wife; clandestine lovers prefer the uncleared bush. This preference is the basis of some of the stock insults current among these people. A person of either sex who is angry with a woman will say to her: '*Wanits i ratsu*.' 'You copulate in the bush', or '*Giug i ratsu*.' 'You conceive in the bush.' (These are indicatives, not imperatives.)

As far as I know, there are no periods of special licence, nor is there any occasion on which extra-marital intercourse is either enjoined or sanctioned with ritual significance, unless we include the punishment of a woman in this manner for breaking taboos connected with the boys' puberty rites (see Chap. VI).

Sexual abstinence is imposed upon certain individuals under special circumstances, but I do not know of any time when the prohibition is general. A woman must refrain from intercourse for some time after the birth of a child. The young men who act as sponsors (*amro*) to the adolescent boys wearing the *upi* must remain continent during certain stages of the puberty rites. Abstinence during the previous night is essential if a man wishes to succeed in bonito fishing, but there are 'medicines' whereby the result of breaking this taboo may be circumvented.

PROSTITUTION

I learned of nothing that could be described as prostitution occurring among these people, as is perhaps to be expected in a community where a partner can be obtained without difficulty. Presents of tobacco, betel, &c., will sometimes pass between lovers, but these are signs of preference, not payment for services rendered. In most villages there are some women who are known to be liberal with their favours, usually these are young wives whose husbands are away working as indentured labourers.

¹ Other stock insults are concerned with incestuous relationships and with faeces, just as in other parts of Melanesia. Typical examples are '*No en sas a tin a tfinamen!*' 'Go eat your mother's faeces!' '*Tetop tfinan!*' 'Copulate with your mother!'

IV

PREGNANCY AND CHILD-BIRTH

KNOWLEDGE OF PATERNITY

842 IT will be evident from what has been said in the preceding chapter concerning the attitude of these natives to extra-marital intercourse when it results in pregnancy, that they are aware of the connexion between copulation and conception. They say, of the man, *wataputs bai'i*, which may be translated 'he makes the child come up', *wataputs* being also used in the sense of 'to go and fetch', and *taputs* without the causative prefix *toa-* meaning 'to come at a person's call'. Of the woman, it is said *mon to giug non*, 'the woman is pregnant'. The same terms are applied to animals. There is abundant evidence of their knowledge in their conversations and in their tales. One of these, for example, deals with a woman whose husband was impotent. She begs him to let her go, so that she can marry a man by whom she can have a child. He refuses, and she takes a lover in the bush, by whom she becomes pregnant. Her husband says: 'Who has made you pregnant? I know the child is not mine, because I cannot have coitus with you.' When the child is born the husband kills it, and the woman divorces him and marries her lover.

842 Their knowledge, however, does not seem to go beyond the necessity for copulation. The child is thought to be formed out of the woman's blood. This idea may possibly have been suggested by the cessation of the menses during pregnancy since this causal relationship is recognized by them. On the part of the man, penetration is thought to be the essential factor. The seminal fluid is [831] looked upon as water, and there is complete ignorance as to the function of the testicles. Village gossip has it that there was a man—now dead—in a neighbouring village whose penis was destroyed by a sore. He made an artificial one of wood, by means of which he copulated with his wife, who produced offspring. The name of one of his sons still living was adduced as proof of the truth of the story, the obvious explanation apparently not being applied to this case. There are other indications of the

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- 842 intelligent, or at any rate more articulate, than the majority of people in the village. They had one child, who died in infancy. They very much want another. But while Matarē was away working as an indentured labourer, Marotē had an intrigue with a man from another village, during which she took contraceptive medicine. The affair was discovered by her husband's brother, who told Matarē about it when he returned, and wanted him to divorce her.
- 837 But he did not do so, partly because he liked her, but also because she is Pinari's daughter, and he did not want to offend the *tsunaun*. As his brother and another man had given her a thrashing, he left it at that. He has never taken a second wife, and says he does not want one. Marotē has not conceived again, and believes that this is because she took the contraceptive medicine. She has tried various counteracting medicines, but without result. To my personal knowledge, her menstrual periods are normal and regular, and there seems no reason why, having already borne one child, she should not become pregnant again, as both she and her husband are young and, to all appearance, perfectly healthy and vigorous. Another woman, who took the contraceptive after the birth of her first child, has been married three times and has had no more children.

ATTITUDE TO STERILITY

- 842 In these 'prescriptions' directions are given for rendering a woman permanently barren. According to my informants these are not seldom carried out. It is a curious anomaly that any one should desire permanent sterility in a community where children are generally welcomed. Such a step, believed to be irrevocable, would not be necessary to ensure to a woman freedom with her lover, the reason most frequently given for the use of these 'medicines'. It may be that the extraordinary carelessness with regard to time characteristic of these people may make a woman under such circumstances indifferent to the permanency of the result. Two women told me they did it in a passion of grief after losing their first child. A tendency to impulsive action, with consequences
- [152] out of all proportion to its cause, seems inherent in the Melanesian temperament, and this manifestation of it is perhaps comparable with the frenzy which leads men and women to commit suicide on some quite paltry provocation (see p. 485). The practice of using 'medicine' believed to make sterility permanent seems to be taken

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years' hard work, but enjoy the enhanced reputation which such generosity (although almost involuntary) accords to them.

(c) *Dreams having a definite sexual element.*159
[556]

The dreams included under this head are confined to those in which the sexual element is clearly expressed in the manifest content. I have made no attempt to deal with the sexual life as illustrated by the 'latent content' of the dreams in this collection, not being qualified to do so.

As regards 'manifest content', then, this collection provides eighteen dreams which can be regarded as sexual. It will be noted that the number is less than half that of the dreams concerned with death and the *war*, a proportion which seems to be significant even in so small a collection.

The sexual act, either performed or solicited, figures in six of these dreams, three being dreams of men and three of women. In each case the individual of the opposite sex figures as the aggressor, the request being either refused or acceded to after much persuasion. This pretence seems to be a form of self-justification to which the natives have recourse also in their waking life, for I was struck by the fact that in every dispute over, or discussion upon, sexual relations which came under my notice, the other party was represented as urging and the speaker as holding back, an allegation which was always denied by the accused. Only one of these dreams deals with a married couple, in the others the relations are illicit. One of them is an 'incest' dream (No. 5, p. 563).

Of the other dreams in this class, mention may be made of one which occurred to the husband of the woman who was the cause of the trouble discussed on p. 119 by being accused of carrying on intrigues with three lovers at once. The dream took place at a time when her behaviour was the subject of general comment in the village. Its implications are obvious:

No. 33. Tchiriv (young adult male).

I dreamed a man whom I did not know hid Tarubi in the bush and covered her up with leaves. I went to look for her. Tahol and Taken asked me: 'Where is your wife?' I said: 'I don't know.' Then I found a snake, and that woke me up. This is a bad dream.

Comments by the recorder. It is usual for illicit relationships to be carried on in the bush. Tarubi is the dreamer's wife, Tahol and Taken are the two wives of a man in whose hut Tchiriv and Tarubi were living at the time. [837]●

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154 holding nothing, and I thought: 'Oh, I thought I was holding a woman.'

159 *Comments by the recorder.* This was apparently a very vivid dream. When I asked Bwapip, according to my usual custom when any one comes on to my verandah early in the day, whether he had dreamed last night, he said: 'I had a very bad dream.' I said: 'Tell me about it.' He said: 'It was about a woman', and seemed disinclined to talk about it, but eventually told me, making sure no one was listening. It seems to be very detailed for a dream, but he repeated parts of the conversation afterwards in identical terms, so it appears to be genuine (though it may have been unconsciously elaborated in the telling). He says he thinks the young lady in question really entertains for him the sentiments expressed in the dream, and he is afraid of its coming true. He stands to her in the relation expressed by the term corresponding to 'sister' ('sib of the opposite sex', see p. 63) and it would be a gross breach of custom for them to have intercourse. But these people are not strict in observing their own rules, and instances of the kind occur not infrequently, though looked at askance by the community.

• [837] Kiots is a girl somewhere between 15 and 20. She is married to a man who is away working at a plantation. She has the reputation in the village of being rather free with her favours.

This is the only dream in my collection in which the conception of incest appears as 'manifest content'. But since connexion with this problem will probably be apparent to a trained analyst in other dreams involving relatives, although their manifest content is not overtly sexual, I here make mention of all the dreams in which there appear any relatives with whom marriage is forbidden according to the kinship system of these natives.

159 (x) *Son dreams of his mother.*

No. 9. Kakari (young adult male, living in his mother's hut).

I dreamed the sore on my foot went right up my leg. Mrs. Hadden put medicine on it but it got no better, so she sent me back home. My mother put native medicine on it, leaves from the bush, but still it would not get better. Then all my toes fell off and my spirit (*abin*) cried about it. I woke up in a fright and jumped up and felt my toes to see if the dream was true. I thought they had really fallen off.

Comments by the recorder. Mrs. Hadden is the manager of the nearest plantation; she is very good to the natives and recently nursed Kakari with a bad septic sore which cost him his little toe. From his manner in describing the dream it must have been very vivid.

the children accompany the mother. In south Bougainville and on the islands of the Bougainville Strait the wife of the deceased remains in the community; frequently the dead man's brother marries the widow; but if he is not so inclined or is already sufficiently provided with wives, the widow can marry another native if he pays the dead man's brother the customary purchase price. 768

[8] The chieftains normally have several wives; the number varies from five to fifty and even more. The common people have one, two or three wives, but rarely more. Male slaves may not marry. 768 171

The women are treated relatively well; to be sure, they have to do a great part of the field work, but they are not slaves to the same extent as on the other Solomon Islands. Also their morality is on a far higher plane than elsewhere in the group. Promiscuous intercourse among unwedded people does not take place to the extent that it does, for example, on St. Christoval and on Guadalcanar; strict propriety is insisted upon in marriage. The wives frequently have a decisive influence on the conduct of their husbands, and I have often had occasion to observe that once you are on good terms with the wives, the husbands regulate their behavior accordingly. Gifts distributed to a few old women often have better success than all arts of persuasion. The chieftain's wives have an even better life; many of them do nothing at all; they keep their husband and company when he is at home and do various kinds of handwork. Some see to it that the plantations always supply the requisite amount of foodstuffs, but only when the husband condescends to work in the plantation with his own hands do all of his better halves accompany him. When he goes on war expeditions the whole group stays at home under the surveillance of a few of the older men who are unfit for battle. One of the chieftain's wives is designated as chief wife, and her male children are the actual heirs of the chieftain. When individual communities live on islands too small to support plantations and produce the needed amount of food, it is the wives' job to keep up market trade with the wealthier neighboring districts. Early in the morning you can see them going to the market in large and small boats, usually accompanied by an older man who probably has the duty of supervisor, since a single old man is scarcely able to provide any sort of effective protection in case of an enemy attack. 595 [622 567] 562 836 [171] 837 622 595